(b) to (c) Pursuant to the submissions made before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India by the Government Counsel on 14.9.2007 in respect of certain Transfer Cases and writ petitions relating to the Sethusamudram Ship Channel Project, the Government has constituted a Committee consisting of eminent persons with the terms of reference to invite objections and suggestions from all concerned including the writ petitioners having interest in the subject matter and to consider all suggestions/proposals/documents after giving them a personal hearing. The report of the Committee is awaited.

Shipbuilding yard at Dharma in Orissa

33. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up a state-of-the-art joint-venture shipbuilding/ship repair yard at Dharma in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether this labour-intensive industry would generate a good amount of employment opportunities; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (d) At present, no such proposal is under consideration of the Government of India. However, the Government of Orissa has intimated that it has received a proposal for setting up a ship building yard and ship repair facilities at the month of the Dharma river in Bhadrak district in Orissa as a joint venture project. The project proposed to be implemented in three phases, has a potential of providing direct as well as indirect employment to about 56,300 persons. Final decision in the matter is yet to be taken by the Government of Orissa.

Repair of NHs in NER

34. SHRI O.T LEPCHA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that various National Highways including NH-31-A in NER are in a deplorable condition and they have become rough and rugged due to excessive rainfall/flood this year; and

(b) if so, the action taken for repairing these highways, NH-wise/State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) National Highways including NH-31-A in North-Eastem Region are being maintained in traffic worthy condition within the availability of funds. State-wise funds during 2007-08 for repair of damaged stretches of various National Highways being maintained by State Public Works Department in North Eastern Region due to rain/flood are as below. As far as National Highways being maintained by Border Roads Organisation are concerned, these are maintained by the funds provided under original and maintenance head, and no separate fund is provided under flood damage repair.

SI. No.	State	Allocation (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	50.00
2.	Assam	500.00
3.	Manipur	100.00
4.	Meghalaya	250.00
5.	Mizoram	150.00
6.	Nagaland	100.00

Proposal for port near Puri

35. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up a port near Baliharchandi about 18 kms. from Puri in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether a port is also proposed to be set up in Astaranga and Kirtania to help give an opening to industrial sector in this region?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) Baliharchandi, Astaranga and Kirtania are Non-Major Ports. Non-Major Ports are under the overall jurisdiction of respective State Governments. The responsibility for development of the above Non-Major Ports, therefore, vests in the Government of Orissa.

Condition on NH-21S in Keonjhar

36. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the road conditions in Keonjhar district of Orissa are the worst and National Highway-215 is now the nightmare of this district;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government are also aware that around 20,000 loaded trucks with minerals ply on this stretch daily and during the rainy season all transportation activity comes to a grinding halt; and

(d) if so, the action plan of the Centre to address this problem on a top priority basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Three National Highways (NHs), *viz,* NH-6, NH-75(Extn.) and NH-215 passes through the district of Keonjhar in the State of Orissa. To improve the conditions of the above stretches of National Highways, improvement and maintenance works are in progress in an aggregated length of 9 km. of NH-6,4.183 km. of